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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/665,552	09/22/2003	Johannes Bartholomaus	1087-RIO446 (18235-05422)	6176
34456	7590	10/30/2006	EXAMINER	
LARSON NEWMAN ABEL POLANSKY & WHITE, LLP 5914 WEST COURTYARD DRIVE SUITE 200 AUSTIN, TX 78730			TRAN, SUSAN T	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			1615	

DATE MAILED: 10/30/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/665,552

Applicant(s)

BARTHOLOMAUS

Examiner

Susan T. Tran

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-28 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-28 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on ____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☒ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 05/20/04.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. ____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: ____.

DETAILED ACTION

Double Patenting

The nonstatutory double patenting rejection is based on a judicially created doctrine grounded in public policy (a policy reflected in the statute) so as to prevent the unjustified or improper timewise extension of the "right to exclude" granted by a patent and to prevent possible harassment by multiple assignees. A nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting rejection is appropriate where the conflicting claims are not identical, but at least one examined application claim is not patentably distinct from the reference claim(s) because the examined application claim is either anticipated by, or would have been obvious over, the reference claim(s). See, e.g., *In re Berg*, 140 F.3d 1428, 46 USPQ2d 1226 (Fed. Cir. 1998); *In re Goodman*, 11 F.3d 1046, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993); *In re Longi*, 759 F.2d 887, 225 USPQ 645 (Fed. Cir. 1985); *In re Van Ornum*, 686 F.2d 937, 214 USPQ 761 (CCPA 1982); *In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970); and *In re Thorington*, 418 F.2d 528, 163 USPQ 644 (CCPA 1969).

A timely filed terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 CFR 1.321(c) or 1.321(d) may be used to overcome an actual or provisional rejection based on a nonstatutory double patenting ground provided the conflicting application or patent either is shown to be commonly owned with this application, or claims an invention made as a result of activities undertaken within the scope of a joint research agreement.

Effective January 1, 1994, a registered attorney or agent of record may sign a terminal disclaimer. A terminal disclaimer signed by the assignee must fully comply with 37 CFR 3.73(b).

Claims 1-28 are rejected on the ground of nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-12, 16-23, 41 and 42 of U.S. Patent No. 6,558,701 ('701). Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because the '701 patent claimed a multilayered tablet comprising a tramadol layer which contains tramadol or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof, a diclofenac layer which contains diclofenac or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof, and a separating layer which separates the tramadol layer from the diclofenac layer. Salts of tramadol and diclofenac are found in claims 2-4. The amounts of tramadol and diclofenac are found in claims 7-12. The

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amounts in percentage weight if converted to weight ratios would fall within the claimed weight ratios. Controlled release matrix is found in claim 16. Coating polymer is found in claims 18-21. Granules, microcapsules or pellets of tramadol and diclofenac are found in claims 22 and 23. Accordingly, the present claims anticipated the claims of the '701 patent.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

The factual inquiries set forth in *Graham v. John Deere Co.*, 383 U.S. 1, 148 USPQ 459 (1966), that are applied for establishing a background for determining obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) are summarized as follows:

1. Determining the scope and contents of the prior art.
2. Ascertaining the differences between the prior art and the claims at issue.
3. Resolving the level of ordinary skill in the pertinent art.
4. Considering objective evidence present in the application indicating obviousness or nonobviousness.

Claims 1-28 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Raffa EP 0 546 676 A1, in view of Oshlack et al. US 6,077,533.

Oshlack teaches a multiparticulate product comprising beads of immediate release active core coated with an extended release coating (abstract; and column 6, lines 8-38). Extended release coating comprises the claimed polymer (column 10, lines

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1-67). Extended release coating can be applied as a layer to the immediate release core, or as a controlled release matrix (columns 12-13; and column 14, lines 1-2).

Oshlack further teaches the claimed release profile (column 9, lines 23-46). Active includes tramadol, and nsaid such as diclofenac sodium (column 5, lines 12-25).

Oshlack does not teach the combination of tramadol and diclofenac.

Raffa teaches a composition comprising tramadol in combination with a non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drug (nsaid) (abstract). Tramadol includes salt of tramadol, such as tramadol hydrochloride (page 3, lines 31-32). Nsaid includes diclofenac (page 4, line 11). Raffa further teaches the claimed ratio between tramadol and nsaid (page 4, lines 19-24). Thus, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to modify the composition of Oshlack using combination of tramadol and diclofenac in view of the teaching of Raffa, because Raffa teaches combination of tramadol and diclofenac provides synergistic analgesic effects, because Raffa teaches combination employs lesser amounts of both drugs, which produces less opioid side effects such as abuse liability, tolerance, constipation and respiratory depression (abstract; and page 3, lines 11-19), because Oshlack teaches a desirability to obtain an effective opioid analgesic dosage form with the use of tramadol as an active drug, and because Oshlack teaches an oral dosage form of opioid analgesic which is bioequivalent and minimizes the food effect (columns 2-3).

Correspondence

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Susan T. Tran whose telephone number is (571) 272-0606. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 6:00 am to 4:30 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Michael Woodward can be reached on (571) 272-8373. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'S. Tran', written in a cursive style.

S. Tran
Patent Examiner
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